

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

COMPLETE LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-24 : (Canceled)

Claim 25 : (New) A method of providing access to a communications network to users traveling through a venue, comprising the steps of:

a) enabling each user to carry a portable, mobile unit having a wireless transceiver and a display;

b) positioning a plurality of access nodes of a local area network at fixed, spaced-apart locations throughout the venue, each access node being in communication with different content providers each having a content database offered at the venue, each access node having a wireless transceiver in wireless communication with the transceiver in the mobile unit when the user is in proximity with a respective access node;

c) initially establishing wireless communication between the mobile unit and the respective access node by associating the mobile unit with the respective access node;

d) authenticating the user of the mobile unit to enable access to the communications network; and

e) establishing communication with a respective content provider on the communications network by accessing a respective content database and retrieving content therefrom for presentation at the display of the mobile unit, and recording at least some session particulars of

a communications session on a server on the communications network during which the mobile unit communicates with the respective content provider.

Claim 26 : (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the associating step is performed by transmitting an association request from the mobile unit to the respective access node, and by receiving an association response from the respective access node at the mobile unit.

Claim 27 : (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the authenticating step is performed by transmitting an authentication request from the mobile unit to the communications network via the respective access node associated with the mobile unit, and by receiving an authentication response from the communications network at the mobile unit via said associated respective node.

Claim 28 : (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the step of transmitting the authentication request is initiated by manual action by the user, and validated at an authentication site in the communications network.

Claim 29 : (New) The method of claim 28, wherein the manual action includes the step of passing a transaction card identifying the user across a card reader on the mobile unit.

Claim 30 : (New) The method of claim 28, wherein an authentication site validates the authentication request only for a limited number of the access nodes.

Claim 31 : (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the recording step is performed by recording the session particulars at the respective access node.

Claim 32 : (New) The method of claim 25; and further comprising a step of manually selecting, at the mobile unit, a parameter of the communication with the respective content provider.

Claim 33 : (New) The method of claim 32, wherein the parameter is selected from a group consisting of a session start time, a session stop time, a session duration, session quality of transmission, session usage, databases accessed, number of contacts, location of mobile unit, time of day, traffic class and category, encryption level, session protocol, packet loss, net throughput, transmit power, priority requested and priority granted.

Claim 34 : (New) The method of claim 25; and further comprising a step of determining one from a plurality of delivery channels along which information content from the respective content provider is delivered to the mobile unit, and a step of displaying the delivered information content on the mobile unit.

Claim 35 : (New) The method of claim 34, wherein the delivery channels have different parameters, and wherein the determining step includes a step of asking the user to select a desired one of the parameters, and a step of selecting the desired one of the parameters by the user.

Claim 36 : (New) The method of claim 35, wherein the parameters are at least one of bandwidth, data rate, quality of service, power output, power consumption, cost, traffic class or category, delivery channel characteristics, minimal signal to noise level, and minimal packet delay.

Claim 37 : (New) The method of claim 35, wherein the asking step includes a step of displaying all the parameters on a display screen on the mobile unit prior to delivering the requested information content.

Claim 38 : (New) The method of claim 25; and further comprising a step of measuring a remaining amount of time that the mobile unit is able to communicate with the respective node, and a step of displaying the remaining amount of time on a display screen on the mobile unit.

Claim 39 : (New) The method of claim 38; and further comprising a step of displaying a total amount of time that the mobile unit has been in communication with the respective node.

Claim 40 : (New) The method of claim 34; and further comprising a step of encrypting the information content prior to delivery.

Claim 41 : (New) The method of claim 34; and further comprising a step of paying for delivery of information content, including a step of presenting the user with different terms of payment by displaying the payment terms on a display screen of the mobile unit; and a step of selecting, by the user, one of the payment terms.

Claim 42 : (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the step of selecting one of the payment terms includes transmitting a user code to a payment validation site having reference codes, and validating the user code when the user code matches one of the reference codes.

Claim 43 : (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the recording step is performed by recording additional session particulars at the mobile unit on the network.